

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method for uniquely marking a media file,  
comprising:

5 receiving a media file; and  
appending an identifier onto the media file.

10 2. The method of claim 1, further comprising retrieving  
the identifier from a non-volatile memory.

15 3. The method of claim 1, wherein the identifier  
identifies a player unit.

4. The method of claim 1, further comprising storing  
the appended media file in a data storage medium.

5. The method of claim 1, further comprising receiving  
a message file.

20 6. The method of claim 5, wherein the media file and  
the message file arrive in a concatenated state.

7. The method of claim 5, wherein the step of receiving a message file comprises receiving a message file selected from the group consisting of commercial messages or informational messages.

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8. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of receiving a media file comprises receiving an audio file.

9. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of receiving  
10 a media file comprises receiving a video file.

10. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of receiving a media file comprises receiving a text file.

15 11. A method for delivering a message file, comprising:  
receiving a media file with a first identifier;  
comparing the first identifier with a second identifier;  
retrieving a message file and producing a message output  
from the message file if the first identifier does not  
20 correspond to the second identifier; and  
producing a media output from the media file.

12. The method of claim 11, further comprising  
retrieving a second identifier from a non-volatile memory.

13. The method of claim 11, wherein the step of  
5 retrieving a message file comprises retrieving a message file  
from a storage device.

14. The method of claim 11, wherein the step of  
retrieving a message file comprises retrieving a message file  
10 from a non-volatile memory.

15. The method of claim 11, wherein the step of  
retrieving a message file comprises retrieving a message file  
selected from the group consisting of commercial messages or  
15 informational messages.

16. The method of claim 11, wherein the step of  
receiving a media file comprises receiving an audio file.

20 17. The method of claim 11, wherein the step of  
receiving a media file comprises receiving a video file.

18. The method of claim 11, wherein the step of receiving a media file comprises receiving a text file.

19. The method of claim 11, wherein the second  
5 identifier uniquely identifies a player unit.

20. The method of claim 11, wherein the first identifier identifies a player unit.

10 21. The method of claim 11, wherein the media file and the message file are in a concatenated state.

22. The method of claim 11, wherein if the message file cannot be retrieved, then the step of producing a media output  
15 is not carried out.

23. A player unit for delivering media files,  
comprising:

a processor;  
20 a non-volatile memory communicatively coupled to the processor;

a first identifier stored in the non-volatile memory,  
wherein the first identifier uniquely identifies the player  
unit;

a communications port communicatively coupled to the  
5 processor and capable of communicatively coupling the player  
unit to a computer system;

a data storage drive communicatively coupled to the  
processor and capable of transferring data between the player  
unit and a removable data storage medium;

10 a first application program residing in the player unit  
and accessible by the processor, the application program  
comprising one or more sequences of instructions for uniquely  
marking a media file, the one or more sequences of  
instructions causing the processor to perform a number of  
15 acts, said acts comprising:

receiving a media file,

retrieving the first identifier from the non-  
volatile memory,

appending the first identifier onto the media file,

20 and

storing the appended media file in the removable  
data storage medium; and

a second application program residing in the player unit and accessible by the processor, the application program comprising one or more sequences of instructions for delivering a message file, the one or more sequences of instructions causing the processor to perform a number of acts, said acts comprising:

receiving a media file with a second identifier;  
comparing the second identifier to the first identifier;

retrieving a message file from the non-volatile memory and producing a message output from the message file if the second identifier does not correspond to the identifier; and

producing a media output from the media file.

24. A player unit for delivering media files, comprising:

a first logic circuit configured to perform a number of acts, said acts comprising:

receiving a media file,  
retrieving a first identifier from a non-volatile memory,

appending a representation of the first identifier  
onto the media file, and

storing the appended media file in a removable data  
storage medium;

5 a second logic circuit configured to perform a number of  
acts, said acts comprising:

receiving a media file with a second identifier;

10 comparing the second identifier to the first  
identifier;

retrieving a message file from the non-volatile  
memory and producing a message output from the message  
file if the second identifier does not correspond to the  
15 identifier; and

producing a media output from the media file;

15 a non-volatile memory communicatively coupled to the  
logic circuits;

a first identifier stored in the non-volatile memory,  
wherein the identifier uniquely identifies the player unit;

a communications port communicatively coupled to the  
20 logic circuits and capable of communicatively coupling the  
player unit to a computer system; and

a data storage drive communicatively coupled to the logic circuits and capable of transferring data between the player unit and a removable data storage medium.

5           25. The method of claim 1, wherein the identifier comprises a derivative of an electronic serial number of a player unit.

10           26. The method of claim 1, further comprising receiving a media identifier that uniquely identifies the media file.

27. The method of claim 26, wherein the media identifier is derived from an industry standard number encoded on the media file.